
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: ALL EMPLOYEES, BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS
FROM: MARTHA WHITE, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR
SUBJECT: CONFLICT OF INTEREST LAW
DATE: JANUARY 4, 2007

Occasionally, an employee or member of a board or committee seeks advice from the Town Administrator or Town Counsel regarding the State's Conflict of Interest Law. Note that under the Conflict of Interest Law, "municipal employees" includes all employees whether full or part-time, *even unpaid board and committee members*. All municipal employees must be aware of their obligations under the law. Towards that end, we have placed on the town's website (Natickma.gov) a brochure entitled "Introduction to the Conflict of Interest Law." Please look under "Information for Employees" from the website for this information.

It is the responsibility of each municipal employee to fully understand and comply with the Conflict of Interest Law. Should you engage in conduct in violation of the law, ***you***, not the municipality, could face civil and/or criminal penalties.

You may be surprised as to what types of conduct may constitute a violation of the Conflict of Interest Law. For example, while everyone probably knows that you may not accept gifts in exchange for agreeing to perform an official act, most employees are probably not aware that you may not hold more than one paid position with the same municipality. Another example is that a company you own may not be a vendor to the Town.

Note that each of these examples has exceptions, and many conflicts or potential conflicts can be remedied through the granting of exemptions or other means. For example, the Selectmen have designated members of some boards and committees as "Special Municipal Employees." Such designation provides some – but not complete – leeway under the Conflict of Interest Law.

Please review the attached brochure carefully and, if you think a conflict may exist, you may wish to call the Ethics Commission directly. Their web site (www.mass.gov/ethics) is also very helpful and I would encourage you to review information available there.